We have lost the word social hygiene. I hope that this library group won't run away with this term medical humanism which I like very much. I hope it makes a little suggestion of what I have in mind. I am quite sure that this emphasis is very desirable at the present time. It is an asset for a physician, will make him a better doctor, and will give him a much greater interest in the community. He will get a far greater edge out of professional life if he cultivates that kind of interest. I am more than sure therefore that there are great possibilities for such an institute as that where real scholarly work can be done. Medicine is far behind in the line of historical approach. But I must not enter into that to-night.

I do want to tell you, Mr. Toastmaster, and all of you who have spoken so generously of me that you have given me a great pleasure in giving me an opportunity to refer to the days which are most vivid, which I cherish most because those early memories are the most vivid. I hope Dr. Sachs won't say this is due to a psychosis. You have brought them back to me and I thank you.

BOOK REVIEW

A New Reading of Haller

Stephen d'Irsay: Albrecht von Haller; eine Studie zur Geistesgeschichte der Aufklärung (Arb. d. Inst. f. Gesch. d. Med., I, 2. p.l., 607-704). 8°. Leipzig, G. Thieme, 1930.

This monograph is a good example of the newer lines of historical investigation emanating from the Leipzig Institute, less archivistic and of more definite philosophic trend than formerly. Some indications of this departure have been already perceptible in the later writings of Sudhoff, who made his reputation as an archivistic, yet in such essays as those on The Hygienic Idea in World History or his recent Johns Hopkins address, evinces a steady resolution to envisage the world "from China to Peru." Under the new director, Professor Sigerist, a highly accomplished gentleman, who has seen something of the world, the tendency comes to fruition, as if the Institute were by way of

realizing upon its heavy investment in archival building stones. To handle a medical theme philosophically requires capacity to deal with ideas impersonally, in such wise that no single idea fills the whole mental horizon; and for all this d'Irsay is unusually fitted by the kind of pre-medical training that results in a well-furnished mind.

The name of Haller was inscribed on the front of the Harvard Medical School as one of the ten great leaders of medical thought before the modern period,[1] a physician so eminent in his day, Sigerist tells us, that a box of books bearing Haller's name, taken from a ship by pirates, was at once forwarded to him by said pirates, out of regard for his immense reputation. So much has been written about this great leader of medicine that it would seem next to impossible to say anything specifically new. Yet d'Irsay does contrive to make us see him in a new light; first in relation to the *philosophes* of the period of "enlightenment" preceding the French Revolution, then from the angle of recent physiology, finally as experimental clinician and pharmacologist, bibliographer and medical historian.

After a brief biographical sketch, there follow two arresting chapters on the *Aufklärung* and on Haller and Voltaire as protagonists of the conflict of philosophic trends which came to a head in the Revolution. At the start, the universities, as strongholds of the old order of things, stood apart from the seething intellectual fermentation around and about them, and Haller, the *Biedermann,* the pensive pietist, was the logical opposite of Voltaire, a mind intensely alive, sceptical, cynical and proof against illusion. The enlightenment, of which Voltaire was prime-mover, was centered in the growing power of the people, the fierce individualism of the intellectual leaders, and more in London and the Royal Society, Paris and the Académie des

[1] The ten names are Hippocrates, Celsus, Galen, Vesalius, Paré, Harvey, Sydenham, Haller, Hunter, Bichat. With some mental reservations as to choice between Celsus and Paracelsus, it would be hard to improve upon the selection.

Sciences, than in Oxford, Cambridge or the great Paris Faculty itself. But at Leyden, Leipzig, Halle and Wittenberg, universities created by popular (or, at least, *bourgeois*) fiat, there were evidences of strong national solidarity and of intense rivalry—a sure index of going concerns. At Göttingen, a more recent creation of the house of Hannover, the aim was practical efficiency vs. *odium theologicum,* and of Göttingen, Haller was to become the leading spirit, utilizing, in an entirely modern manner, those novel agencies of progress, the library, the scientific society and the scientific periodical. Over all stood the great figure of Newton, revered alike by Haller and Voltaire as the expositor of a universe regulated by mathematical laws, Deocentric for Haller, anthropocentric for Voltaire. Newton, Locke, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke were all Deists, an 18th century variant of Unitarians; but Haller, the devout Bibliolater and *defensor Fidei,* "thinks and prays," while "Voltaire only thinks." With commendable cleverness, d'Irsay elucidates these shades of difference by citation from the didactic verses by which both will be best remembered as poets—Haller's apostrophe to Newton in *Die Alpen* and Voltaire's *Epitre à Uranie.* Here Haller is sad and pensive, like Matthew Arnold in "Resignation," Voltaire serene, cool, agnostic, tending visibly toward the biologic pessimism of Darwin and Nietzsche. The young scholar's handling of this perilous theme is singularly mature, through his capacity to deal with the ideas and social forces at play like pieces and pawns on a chessboard. He sees Voltaire clearly as the truer child and prophet of his particular period, while Haller stood upon the ancient ways, like Lord Kelvin in his duel with Huxley about geologic time. Haller, meditating on Newton and mourning for his Mariane, is not far removed from the Matthew Arnold of the Grande Chartreuse poem, the Brahms of *Vier ernste Gesänge* or even Richard Strauss in *Allerseelen.* The Voltaire of *Les systèmes* is already like Stendhal *(La seule chose qui excuse Dieu, c'est qu'il n'existe pas)* or Mencken on the Gods or Stravinsky's trait of making the orchestra mock and sneer at music itself.

In Voltaire's *in nova fert animus,* there is a whiff of the Russians of the extreme left: revolution, "red ruin and the breaking up of laws" were sure to follow. Yet from the clash of such opposing tendencies is the historic process evolved and, at this time of day, we should be far from ridiculing Haller as a dumb *bourgeois* and Philistine, as did Goethe and Maupertuis. To-day, he would be an exponent of the social forces defined by Roosevelt as "centripetal," guaranteeing the certainty of rolls and coffee for breakfast, a full dinner-pail, clothes on your back, a roof over your head, and business as usual. Nor did Haller lapse into such sterile 18th century ineptitudes as *qu'ils mangent du gateau* or "Eat your pudding, slave, and hold your tongue." One senses the wise, benignant physician, the true friend of humanity.

The most brilliant chapter in the book is the *Anatomia animata,* for here we grasp the secret of Haller's eminence as a physiologist. Imbued with the Newtonian concept of a world mechanically ordered, a universe susceptible of study and interpretation as mechanism *(Theos geometer),* Haller injects the dynamic idea into muscular contraction, and lo! the old Galenic teleology falls to the ground. Under Haller, anatomy itself becomes an experimental science. Many novel findings, wrested from his obscure Latin pages, are here presented for the first time, illustrating Verneuil's idea that erudition, under good generalship, merges into creative interpretation. The succeeding chapter, on irritability, is not so satisfactory. The reasoning is too abstruse and metaphysical, and the real outcome of the Glisson-Haller doctrine, the distinction between muscular contraction (irritability) and nerve-impulse (sensibility), let alone its relation to Ehrlich's side-chain theory, is not elucidated. But the Cnidian mania of the 18th century for minute and multifarious classification, its effect in accelerating the description of hitherto unknown diseases, is clearly expounded, and for the first time, we see Haller himself as a precursor in experimental clinical medicine. In the following chapter, we learn of his work in experimental pharmacology, his unapproachable achievement in

medical bibliography, his weakness as medical historian. Haller, the physiologist, emancipated himself from Galen. Haller, the clinician and historian, is still under the spell, a brooding naturalist, incapable of moving into the biochemic view of things, which even Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Franciscus Sylvius, Boerhaave, Friedrich Hoffman and Van Swieten, had surmised. The last chapter is a going exposition of the social and intellectual forces which were to submerge Haller: how the world of *comédies larmoyantes* and "sensibility," in which he lived, moved and had his being, was overthrown by the metallic humors of the Revolution—

"Beneath this stone the Man of Feeling lies,"

and how the stilted classicism of the Napoleonic period had its natural outcome in the Romantic movement, which momentarily supported Haller, as the later period of mordant scientific realism passed him by—

"I laugh when Mrs. Haller cries:
My heart is surely ossifying."

Haller, like all the great 18th century physicians, stood on a pedestal, now seen from the Nietzschean "pathos of distance."

The author's conclusion of the whole matter is a jubilant *stretto* upon the Lamartine apotheosis of those rational ideas *(pensées fortes),* which set the mind and spirit free and fit mankind to breathe in an ampler and more rejuvenating atmosphere—

"Qui montent, montent toujours, par d'autres remplacées,
Et ne redescendent jamais!"

The little book opens out many new and striking views of forgotten things, and will shortly appear, revised and enlarged, in English dress.

F. H. GARRISON.